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REMARKS OF W. AVERELL HARRIMAN, DIRECTOR FOR MUTUAL SECURITY,  
AT THE CEREMONY COMMEMORATING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SIGNING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY, CONSTITUTION HALL,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Not the least remarkable thing about this anniversary we celebrate today is that it is only the third. It seems scarcely possible that the North Atlantic Treaty was signed only three years ago. The first meeting of the NATO Council took place only two and a half years ago. It was only one year ago that General Eisenhower assumed his command. Yet in so short a time, NATO has become one of the most powerful facts of international life. It is the foundation of the structure of security the free nations are building around the world.

We are participating in a new development in the history of nations. There have been other alliances in the past; in fact, there is another now. The Soviet Union has forced its satellites into an involuntary alliance held together by force and fear. This is the old system of domination and dictatorship.

NATO is the new concept. Twelve European countries with Canada and the United States have voluntarily come together as free and equal partners, eager to work out common solutions to common problems. It may be harder to find agreement among equal nations than it is to dictate agreement from the Kremlin, but the agreements we make will be strong and enduring, because they are the voluntary agreements of free men determined to preserve their freedom.

In the preservation of this freedom, our most pressing problem is to build a firm defense against aggression. It is to accomplish this that most of our energies are now bent. That job is not yet completed, but already, in three years, we see clearly that it can be done. We can look forward with confidence to the time when the free world is strong enough in arms to make aggression impractical. When that time comes, we can devote more of our energies to strengthening the world in other ways. It is then, as the Secretary of State has suggested, that NATO may serve as an instrument for the fulfillment of the great aspirations of mankind.

But in the meantime, our immediate task remains with us -- to make ourselves secure. Just as no individual can find security unless his nation is secure, no free nation can find security unless the free world is secure. The NATO partners have joined their resources in building collective strength -- not on the basis of narrow nationalism, but on the basis of an effective division of labor among partners, with each country contributing to a balanced, collective force.

The NATO idea is based upon the principle of mutual effort. It can be successful only if each nation does its part. The United States, as the strongest of the partners, is called upon to make the greatest contribution to the mutual security. This contribution would be useless if it were not matched by vigorous efforts on the part of other countries. The extraordinary progress that NATO has made is a demonstration that all partners are doing their part.

The United States gives strength to NATO. In turn we gain strength from it. This is the meaning of mutual security -- the great modern answer to the age-old problem of how nations can preserve peace.

It is on this principle that 14 nations have bound themselves together in NATO. It is on this principle that the United States has embarked upon a great worldwide program of mutual security.

The danger is worldwide and so is our response. The danger takes many forms. So does our effort to gain security. We have not accepted the fallacy that the only threat is a military one. The threat of communism does not come only from the sword. The threat of communism is strong where men are weak -- weakened from hunger, injustice, or ignorance. We must build security by helping people strengthen themselves in other than military ways. We know that the only world in which we can be secure is a world in which men are strong, healthy, and free.

This is the philosophy behind all our joint efforts in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Through NATO, we are working for the common defense against aggression. Through NATO, we are working for economic expansion and the prosperity of all our peoples. Through NATO, we are working to foster freedom. Through NATO, we are seeking to release the intellectual and spiritual forces which are our common heritage.

In joining together for these purposes, the nations of the North Atlantic Community have had to shake off the weight of the historic prejudices which we all carry. We have had to develop new patterns of thought.

This is as true of the United States as it is of the other NATO partners. Perhaps it is even more true of us, for the United States has been singularly protected by its history and geography. When we were projected into a position of world leadership, there were those who questioned our ability to change our traditional

outlook. But who today, reflecting on the history of the last few years, can doubt the capacity of the American people to play the role in which we have been cast? Who, today, reflecting upon the initiative shown in Europe, can doubt the capacity of the peoples of all the NATO countries to rise to the challenge?

The greatest single asset of the North Atlantic Community is its human resources. Together we number some 400-million of the most creative and enlightened people in the world with by far the largest part of the world's industrial production. With all these resources, why should we live in fear?

We need not live in fear.

Another world war is not inevitable.

Let no man say it is.

It is true that there are difficult tasks ahead. Let us not delude ourselves that because we have accomplished much in three years we may now relax our efforts.

The whole process of building mutual security is at a critical phase in all its aspects. Courageous political decisions must be made. Total production must continue to expand. The military build-up must go ahead rapidly. If any of us who are joined in this great endeavor slackens his efforts now, we will undermine what we have built. This is a critical moment in history when the future of mankind will be determined by the steadfastness, the vigor and the speed with which we all press forward.

In our own lifetime we have seen the terrible results of hesitation. There is no time for hesitation now.

The progress of the last three years shows what can be done when like-minded nations work together. Together, this great assembly of free men can surely obtain our common objectives of security and the opportunity for human progress.

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